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Monarchy versus Democracy: A Denunciation on the Dirty Game of Power Politics in the Plays of Ghashiram Kotwal and The Apple Cart

Abstract: Monarchy (royalty) and Democracy are the two main forms of the govt. which are made to retain the social order methodically to make people law-abiding and reputable. To shield country from falling into chaos, giving equal rights and opportunities to their subjects without discrimination by giving them offices to satisfy their requirements and establishing various institutions for their necessities and solace are some major tasks of an incumbent government. We realize that these are the first and foremost duty of all the governments whether it is democracy or monarchy because they come into being for the welfare of the nation .

But generally it is seen that when a man holds position in influence it turns his head and he winds up degenerate and as opposed to considering the welfare of the country he begins satisfying his own lewd, wants being merciless and robust the desire for influence, riches and excellence causes moral wantonness in him.

The power corrupts and the absolute power corrupts a man absolutely. Hence, there is a great need of check over the untrammelled power of the ruling class for making it smooth going whether it being a democracy or monarchy. This fact is superbly presented by Vijay

Tendulkar in his famous play “Ghashiram Kotwal” and in another play “Apple Cart” by G.B.Shaw.

In the play Ghashiram Kotwal, we see that the protagonist Ghashiram has an unbounded hunger for power and status which makes him in a way blind that he sells his conscience makes a deal with Nana phadnavis the chieftain of Peshwa in Maharashtra and becomes the kotwal of Pune to take revenge of his insult by holding power. In this dirty game of power politics he not only sacrifices the life of his innocent daughter but his own life becomes just a chaos due to the havoc created by him in the city and he inadvertently becomes a mere puppet in the hands of Nana who symbolizes the corrupt ruling class holding absolute power.

In the play Apple Cart, we see a tussle between the king Magnus and PM Proteus as well as other ministers to decide who will drive the apple cart(govt.). In a democratic framework Shaw suggests ,the govt. is simply a cart which is used by the PM for his own benefits of interest as he holds the outright power so he doesn't take any interest in running the cart wisely with the honour of nation for the welfare of common man but seeks the interest of plutocracy. As the cart is full of demagogues(politicians or rabble rousers) who always humbug the public and endeavour to upset the cart.

Keywords- Chaos, Demagogues, Havoc, Plutocracy, Untrammelled

As we realize that the institution of government is as old as human society itself. Without a governing body there would be a reign of chaos in the society. The growing populace put a pressure to have system of laws that society members had to follow. Thus the government came into being for the renovation of safety and public order in society. Exceptional types of executive at certain times evolved at various places like Monarchy , Socialist, Dictatorship, Communism and Democracy.

Among them monarchy is the most ancient and typical form of govt in which supreme power is bestowed upon a single man (monarch), who typically makes all the laws and decisions and in which power and position is passed through bloodline. Monarchy can be divided between the governing or independent body especially and the ruling body; the parliament or independent body establishes laws while the ruling body, the monarch remains influential in affairs of state and public welfare. His affairs and functions are defined constitutionally. In absolute monarchy, there is nobody other than the monarch who himself makes laws and impose his will on his subjects. In modern days absolute monarchy exists in South Arabia and United Arab Emirates where monarchs gain power through hereditary rights during peaceful succession.

While democracy is a type of government administered by the folks of the State either directly or indirectly by giving the ability to control to the elective representatives. Democracy is based on a principle of equality and freedom which are generally protected by the constitution. Monarchy may also give this privilege but it totally depends on the preferences and inclinations of the monarch as in monarchy monarch is the law. Democracy is the voice of many, diminishing the social gap structure. There are mainly three branches of this government – legislative, executive and judiciary, which keep balance through inspecting one another's proposal for the society. The open communication and acceptance of each others' beliefs and ideas in promoting peace and order for everyone in the society is one of the goals envisioned when this form of government was being developed.

Which form of government is better between both is a debatable point as both have their own pros and cons. Some say monarchy is much smarter because it can provide the stability to a country or a nation that democracy in many situations is unable to provide. In democracy the successor is determined through voting; this allows inexperienced people to hold office of high responsibility relying on it while in monarchy the successor is bred from

birth to hold the office of dignity; being grown up as a king or a queen. They don't make any false promises to the people mere to be popular like the democratic government. As there is no other political party against them therefore, all citizens are equal in his or her eyes. But no form of government is free from flaws. We know that power corrupts and absolute power corrupts a man absolutely and while holding power the man deviates from the path of morality and being intoxicated he starts running after fulfilling his lust; the lust for wealth, status, and beauty. Hence, it is the need of the hour that there should be a check on their untrammelled power for the progress of the country and the people. This fact is very artistically and beautifully presented by both the dramatists in their plays "Ghashiram Kotwal" by Vijay Tendulkar and in the play "The Apple Cart" by G.B. Shaw .

The play "Apple Cart" by G.B. Shaw is a satire on the follies of democracy and monarchy and showed the conflict between the both and the plutocracy. As the title itself suggests it has been derived from the proverb "turn the apple cart" indicating a dispute arises from the incident when a person spoils or baffles someone else's carefully arranged plans. It also refers to an attempt at the overthrowing of the existing and well established customs and traditions prevalent in the society and are followed by its members with tacit consent. Democracy is generally supposed to be the best form of government that it is the govt. Of the people, for the people and by the people. This popular notion is minutely examined by Shaw in his play by showing that democracy is nothing like that; it also has its own limitations and shortcomings which puts question mark on it and demands for their removal to find a better system of govt. This very fact has been depicted through the conduct of the ministers during the two cabinet meetings where they constantly squabble and quarrel and care for their own interests and benefits rather than thinking for the benefit of the nation and thus always indulge themselves in upsetting the apple cart of democracy as they are corrupt and money- minded. In such situation the concept "govt. by the people and for the people" becomes a mere myth .

Another popular concept has been punctured by the author that monarch in democracy is a mere figurehead or like an Indian rubber stamp who is bound to follow minister's advice for any decision. In the tussle of king Magnus and PM Proteus, we see that both are strong and clever men and both forcefully and clearly put forward their respective point of view to run the govt. in their own way. In a stormy meeting of the king, Prime Minister and cabinet, the PM gives the king the ultimatum to remain as king with no power whatsoever, without even a veto or else the cabinet will resign in mass. In the next meeting the king answers the ultimatum by declaring his own abdication from kingship forming a political party and taking participation in the election as a commoner. After winning election he will make a different political party under his prime ministership. This is a comediatic paradox of the play in which king wins because of his better intelligence, wit, far-sightedness and powerful will, he turned the tables upon his opponents and gets the better of them by playing his trump card at the last moment. As king Magnus is a wise man, he was able to tackle the crisis coming to him one after the other. He is well versed in the cards game (politics) by having strong insight and better foresight. He has been exercising the Constitutional rights of veto too, which he thinks is essential to avoid any danger or risky situation but that was opposed by the cabinet. Magnus wanted to pay heed on the corruption prevalent and increasing in the offices but it was ignored. As the cabinet wished to make the king totally dumb and disabled by the scheme of giving ultimatum but the king very tactfully and diplomatically diverts the case to the parliamentary decision whether they will approve the cabinet govt. or monarchical government. He has victory over the crisis, not by greater astuteness but because he has ace of trumps in his hand and he knows when and how to use it. By maintaining his royal dignity and respectability he reduces the will of ministers rather than to be a cipher he chooses abandoning his throne and by taking for him a very rosy chance of becoming a popularly elected Prime Minister himself. Having read the play it isn't right to assume that Shaw has packed cards against the

popular govt.(democracy)by focusing on the capacities of the ruler and uncovering the follies and snickering at the fairly chosen ministers. Shaw has done as such, rather he has examined the numerous shortcomings of majority rule government and put his perspective so trenchantly that everything turned into an incredible aggravation to thought. His arguments carry conviction and make the readers sit up ,think and realize that all isn't well with democracy therefore, a system of check and balance is essential for its successful working and the monarch can play an effective role in this respect. It is generally supposed that in democracy the ministers;the elected representatives of the people, are capable men and they enjoy total opportunity of activity. Be that as it may, Shaw has obviously settled that it isn't so. The ministers are unimportant manikins in the hands of administrators. They prepare notes for their utilization and furthermore work out addresses which they read out in open before public. This is so in the light of fact that the ministers change every five years and sometimes even earlier yet the bureaucrats proceed at their employments till the finish of their vocation and they have more experience and better learning hence, the ministers tend to be mere puppets in their hands as they can do nothing without their advice and guidance.

In the play, Shaw has also examined critically the role of plutocracy or big powerful industrial concerns like Breakages Limited , very negation to democracy. They purchase new developments and stifle them in this way making incredible mischief to the nation. They have their own personal stakes and they generally care to their own benefit not for the country. They not only control the means of large scale creation but also the machinery of distribution. Consequently the real power lies in their grasp and both democracy and monarchy are good for nothing and vulnerable till their forces are checked and they are made increasingly mindful.

In the play, Shaw has favoured neither democracy nor royalty yet he has focused his attention on the problem resulting from a conflict between the two and of both with plutocracy; whose power and influence must be curbed for the economic good of the nation. Shaw's plea

in the play ,is that untrammelled democracy is as bad as absolute monarchy. Democracy as a form of government is liable to sacrifice higher principles for the sake of votes. It can likewise degenerate itself in different routes if there is no watchdog to distinguish its misdoings. A Constitutional monarch is the vigilant of it. He represents governing rules in an arrangement of popularly elected government to rectify the faults of both of democracy and monarchy. Hence the Men like king Magnus are the urgent need of the hour to prevent the corrupt officials to have their own way outrightly.

The same drawbacks and flaws with a different callous story are depicted by the well reputed controversial Indian dramatist, Vijay Tendulkar in his famous play “Ghashiram Kotwal”. The play reveals the fact that power corrupts and absolute power corrupts a man absolutely. The play is based on the life of Nana Phadnavis, one of the leading ministers in Peshwa court in Pune and Ghashiram Kotwal ,the city's chief of police. Play starts with an invocation to Lord Ganesha. At that point the Brahmins of pune present themselves and we can see the ethically degenerated situation in Pune. Nana Phadnavis who is the Diwan (chief secretary) of Pune is additionally degenerate and visits the lavani artist. Ghasiram is working with the lavani artist. Ghasiram being a Brahmin goes to gather contribution at the Peshwa's celebration the following day. Anyway he is abused there and is accused of pick-stashing and detained for the offence. He at that point chooses to render retribution. So the play proceed to achieve the following piece of this play.

Ghasiram deals his own girl to get the post of kotwal(police boss) of Pune from Nana. Having got the post he starts to uphold strict standards in the city. He begins requesting licenses for everything and begins tossing individuals behind bars for the littlest offences. Meanwhile, Ghasiram's little girl is impregnated by Nana, and kicks the bucket amid labor. The circumstance goes out of hand when a couple of individuals in the jail bite the dust from

suffocation. The Brahmin at that point grumble to the Peshwa. The Peshwa summons Nana who orders Ghasiram to be executed in the most insensitive way that could be available.

In the power game man is either a hostage to other people or make others hostage at democratic dimensions. In the vicious challenge for influence and notoriety the richest man misuses and exploits his own fellow beings and utilizes them as negligible manikins for his narrow-minded motives. The setting of the controversial play 'Ghashiram Kotwal' takes us to the 18th century Peshwa regime in Maharashtra yet this play isn't limited inside the backdrop of Indian governmental issues of that time but in modern times we find the same situation of the ruling class who is totally corrupt tipsy and intoxicated by the power oppress the innocents and put them in a miserable condition. The play uncovers and assaults the wickedness and intemperance of the ruling class, the Brahmin of Pune who used to enjoy power over other caste people having no moral scruples while they are considered to be the custodians of public morality in the society.

On the other hand, the powerful ruler Nana who is a tactful politician operates his limitless power in such a way that he acquires what he desires and ceaselessly be a winner in the power game of dirty politics. He uses Ghasiram as a tool to dispose his preys and hush up everything clearly without his being brought in the limelight. Thus Ghasiram, a common man becomes a monster by the callousness and inhuman behavior of the society which doesn't sympathize with the poor and the downtrodden and favours only rich and powerful people however wrong they are. This unjustified attitude of ruling class turned him into devil and being stoned to death mercilessly.

Through the play Tendulkar brought wrongdoings of police force into limelight who is also a symbol of power, in fact ought to be the protector of law and order instead they associat with cruelty, operation and arrogance. Since time immemorial the corruption has been the Hallmark of police force. Ghasiram was utterly humiliated in the hands of police men,

arrested and falsely accused of theft. Further to this, they prevented him from attending the ceremonial dinner given by Peshwa. The policemen flip deaf ear to his pleadings and damage his recognition. Thus, police force used their power in a wrong way to crush him ruthlessly; this hurt his ego and he takes the oath to take revenge of his insult coming into power by selling his conscience through surrendering his daughter's honour to the lusty, lecherous Nana.

Through the depiction of Ghasiram, Tendulkar illustrates how the power makes a man lose his self-control and becomes barbarous. The play throws a symbolic radiance on the lethal relationship among politicians, criminals, policemen and prostitutes who are concerned in bombarding a terrible warfare in opposition to peace, morality and justice. In the play the author proven the social and political state of affairs where atrocities, malicious strategies, innocuousness and brutality are embedded in the dirty game of power politics to use man merely as a puppet or pawn. This social setup remains unaltered invariably as long as we the common men not realize their exploitation and raise voice against it.

To sum up, we can say that both the forms of government despite having flaws are good in their own way but there needs a crucial check on the untrammelled power of the head in both the govt. A person assuming office of responsibility towards people must be free from the lust of power, wealth and beauty, one should be unbiased, sincere, truthful, and honest whether it being a democracy or monarchy.

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